

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please REPLACE the Abstract as follows:

~~A method and apparatus are disclosed for processing requests from a traveler for a travel product priced in accordance with a specified degree of flexibility. A traveler's specified degree of flexibility is evaluated to determine an appropriate price and corresponding customized restrictions. Each travel product is evaluated in terms of one or more variable components, each having a range of possible options. For each applicable variable component, the traveler specifies his or her degree of flexibility, if any. The stated degree of flexibility is used to evaluate the traveler's tendency toward a business or leisure status and to determine appropriate restrictions for the individual traveler and a corresponding price. The traveler's degree of flexibility is evaluated and the resulting flexibility rating is utilized to determine a price, such as a discount off of an established price, such as a published commercial fare for a travel product. The flexibility rating can be compared to flexibility ratings for a hypothetical extreme leisure traveler (most flexible traveler) and a hypothetical extreme business traveler (least flexible traveler) to derive a corresponding price. The present invention rewards a traveler that commits to a specified degree of flexibility for a travel product with a discounted fare, subject to one or more customized restrictions. In a "voucher-sale" embodiment, a voucher is issued to a traveler that establishes a right to travel, subject to customized restrictions that are based in part on the specified degree of flexibility, and optionally further subject to availability. In a "confirmed-sale" embodiment, confirmed or reserved tickets are provided after the traveler's specified degree of flexibility has been evaluated and a corresponding price has been established. In a buyer-driven embodiment, the traveler specifies a maximum price for which the traveler will commit to a specified degree of flexibility.~~

According to one or more embodiments of the present invention, a method and apparatus are provided that allow for receiving from a customer a request to purchase a travel product. The travel product is associated with at least one variable component and the request includes information about a first flexibility of the customer. At least one travel product is determined based on the first flexibility of the customer, and a score is determined based on the first flexibility of the customer. A discount is determined based on the score, a minimum flexibility score, and a maximum flexibility score.